

REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE



Report Reference	C-23-34
Meeting Date	25 th March 2024
Agenda Item	10
Prepared by	Town Clerk

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Civility and Respect Project is led by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and One Voice Wales (OVW) and was launched to address growing concerns about the impact bullying, harassment and intimidation of councils, councillors and staff has on the effectiveness of councils.

This council has been fortunate that there have been no significant issues of poor conduct affecting the council. The council has a suite of robust policies which clearly define the roles of officers and members and all members have engaged positively in induction and training attendance. However, the council should never be complacent and ensuring the continuation of these standards is important.

As part of the project, the Civility and Respect pledge has been created which aims to commit councils to upholding good governance and standards which support civility and respect. A video explaining the pledge can be viewed here: [Civility and Respect Pledge video](#). The pledge also indicates support to the continued lobbying by the national bodies for a change in legislation to strengthen the standards regime, including the reintroduction of sanctions for members (where appropriate) as recommended by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

2.0 PLEDGE COMMITMENTS

The Civility and Respect Pledge involves commitment to eight statements:

- 1) Our council has agreed that it will treat all councillors, all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.
- 2) Our council has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff
- 3) Our council has signed up to a Code of Conduct for councillors
- 4) Our council has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.
- 5) Our council will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.
- 6) Our council will commit to calling out bullying and harassment when it happens.
- 7) Our council will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council e.g., via the Local Council Award Scheme
- 8) Our council supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.

The Town Clerk confirms the council meets the requirements set out in points 2, 3 and 4. The council

provides access to, and encourages, members to undertake relevant training and sets out requirements for training to perform certain roles (e.g. chairing committees). The council has a suite of policies including a Code of Conduct for members, a member/officer protocol and dignity at work policy.

3.0 DECISION REQUIRED

Council should consider resolving to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge and endorsement of the pledge commitments.